

# PROVIDING QUALITY TUTORING

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Tutors play a key role in the teaching and learning process at OUM. They are central figures in tutorial sessions and online forums, where they facilitate learning and encourage learners to share and expand their knowledge. Whether a tutor does a good job will be no secret. Most of our learners are mature working adults who are a discerning lot. They know it when a tutor is lackadaisical or lacking in his or her teaching performance.

There is a centre in OUM which is specifically dedicated to managing and helping tutors. Called the Centre for Tutor Management and Development (CTMD), it provides training and retraining for all tutors at the University. When you take up the job as an OUM tutor, you will be asked to go for the training. If you apply what you learn in this training, you will be on your way to becoming one of our cherished quality tutors.

Besides the training, you will also receive guidance and advice from lead tutors. There is at least one lead tutor at each centre whose job includes helping and advising the other tutors. In addition, OUM recently published a Tutor's Handbook, which would make a reliable and useful companion in your quest to provide quality tutoring.

As a tutor, you do not just teach. Instead, you act as facilitators in both classroom and online discussion forums. During tutorials, you need to help your learners to understand difficult concepts and master necessary skills. In online forums, you need to be available and ever-ready to help your learners



in discussing what they have learnt and any other issue related to the course they are taking. It is your duty to help keep them on track in these discussions. Overall, one could say it is the tutor's responsibility to make the online forum a conducive and active learning environment.

It is important to build a good tutor-learner relationship with your learners. When marking their assignments, be fair and provide constructive feedback so that they could improve their future assignments. Guide them in preparing for final examinations. If needed, provide them with academic counselling so that they could perform better.

If you take a look at the Tutor's Handbook, which we strongly hope you will, you will find that there is a section on effective tutoring. Six habits of a highly effective tutor have been outlined for your benefit. Why don't you read up and see whether you could inculcate these habits in yourself?

Quality tutoring is a key concern for OUM. Consequently, the

University has ways of checking to ensure that its learners are receiving the best guidance from their tutors. Feedback is sought from learners on their expectations, the learning opportunities provided to them and the issues that they face.

Criticism has been received on tutors who did not carry out their roles adequately in tutorial sessions and online forums. These have been taken note of by the CTMD with a view to addressing them for the benefit of our learners. The lesson in this for all of us is that each and everyone of us needs to perform our roles and responsibilities to the best of our ability so that we will earn bouquets, not brickbats.

To those of you who have been bending over backwards in order to be a great tutor to your learners, thank you! Your efforts have not gone unrecognised. We hope you will soar even higher with us. And if you have any suggestions on how we can improve ourselves, please drop us a note. We would love to hear from you.